



# TRICARE HELP E-MAIL SERVICE (THEMS)

## NEWSLETTER

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“Helping to Understand”



### TRICARE Help Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the TRICARE Help E-mail Service, operated by the US Army Medical Command in San Antonio, Texas.

### THEMS

#### What is THEMS?

THEMS is a free e-mail service that provides quick answers to TRICARE questions. Clinical issues should be referred to your primary care provider. The e-mail address is: TRICARE\_help@amedd.army.mil.



Click here to send your TRICARE questions, concerns, or comments.

### TRICARE Prime Remote for Active Duty Service Members & their Families

Active duty service members and eligible

family members, living and working in remote areas, are eligible for a form of health care delivery called TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR). This program is not available to retirees and their families, nor is it available to active duty family members who do not reside with a TPR-eligible sponsor. These beneficiaries may use TRICARE Prime (if available), TRICARE Standard or TRICARE Extra.

The most basic requirement is that the sponsor both live and work more than 50 miles from a military treatment facility (MTF). Eligibility is determined by zip code. Here is a link to help you determine if you meet this basic requirement:

<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tp/>. For example, if the sponsor lives 60 miles from a MTF, but works at a location 30 miles from the MTF, neither the sponsor nor the family is eligible for TPR. If eligible, the sponsor must enroll in TPR. The

spouse and eligible children must reside with a TPR-eligible sponsor in order to enjoy the benefits of TPR. Eligible family members (such as college students) who do not meet the “reside with” requirement may use TRICARE Prime (if available), TRICARE Standard or Extra in lieu of TPR.

Like TRICARE Prime, TPR enrollment requires completion of an enrollment form. If contracted network providers are available within access standards (about 30 minutes for primary care and 1 hour for specialist care), the network provider must be used. Otherwise, any TRICARE authorized provider may be used for TPR primary and specialty care. An important factor pertains to specialty care: A health care finder (HCF) must authorize all non-emergency specialist care. Without the required authorization, TPR specialist claims are subject to processing

under the “point-of-service” (POS) option. POS claims are subject to a \$300 deductible and a 50% cost share.

All active duty families living and working in a remote area should make sure they have a copy of the TPR Handbook. If you have not received a copy, you can download a copy from this link: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tpr/eandm.cfm>. The Handbook contains phone numbers to reach a HCF for specialty care authorizations and other useful information for the military family living away from the customer service support available at a military installation.

In most cases, your providers will file your claims for you. If they refuse, you can file the claims yourself; make sure to attach an itemized bill to your claim. Here is a link with information to help you file your claims: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/claims/>.

The Military Medical Support Office (MMSO) was established to help the service member coordinate both medical and dental care away

from military medical or dental treatment facilities. Here is a link to its website: <http://mmso.med.navy.mil/>. Family members should coordinate their care through the TRICARE HCF rather than the MMSO. Reminder: Dental care is not part of the normal TRICARE benefit. Family members should use the TRICARE Dental program for dental coverage. Here is a link with program information: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/beneficiary/beneficiary/supprog.html>.

Probably the most important thing to remember about health care in a remote area is to use support functions such as the Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinator (BCAC) (<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/BCACDirectory.htm>) or THEMS. If you have a problem, ask for help early so a small issue does not grow into a serious problem.

## **New 2002 TRICARE Handbook Available**

The new handbook is being shipped to

TRICARE Service Centers and MTFs in every TRICARE region and is available to sponsors and their family members upon request. An electronic version of the handbook is available for viewing or downloading at [www.tricare.osd.mil/TricareHandbook/](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/TricareHandbook/). Providers or organizations may order additional quantities at this site.

A list of local and regional toll-free TRICARE telephone numbers is available in the Handbook and on the TRICARE Web site at [www.tricare.osd.mil/main/tollfree.htm](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/main/tollfree.htm).